

Whereas the American people have expressed their loss of confidence through self-organized and self-funded taxpayer marches on Washington, at countless "tea party" events, at townhalls and speeches, and with numerous letters, emails, and phone calls to their elected representatives;

Whereas the Democrat majority has all but announced plans to use any lame-duck Congress to advance currently unattainable, partisan policies that are widely unpopular with the American people or that further increase the national debt against the will of most Americans;

Whereas reconvening the House of Representatives in a lame-duck session to address major new legislation subverts the will of the American people, lessens accountability, and does lasting damage to the dignity and integrity of this body's proceedings; and

Whereas under the leadership of Speaker Pelosi and the Democrat majority, and largely due to the current trends of expanding governmental power and limiting individual liberty, the American people have lost confidence in their elected officials, and that faith must be restored: Now, therefore, be it—

Resolved, That the House of Representatives pledges not to assemble on or between November 2, 2010, and January 3, 2011, except in the case of an unforeseen, sudden emergency requiring immediate action from Congress, and that the consideration of any of the following matters does not constitute an unforeseen, sudden emergency:

- (1) Card check, including H.R. 1409 (111th).
- (2) A national energy tax, including H.R. 2454 (111th).
- (3) Any legislation that would provide more authority to Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac.
- (4) Any legislation pertaining to the Immigration and Nationality Act.
- (5) Any legislation making regular appropriations for fiscal year 2011 that would be an increase over previous funding levels.
- (6) Any legislation increasing any tax on any American.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. RICHARDSON). Under rule IX, a resolution offered from the floor by a Member other than the majority leader or the minority leader as a question of the privileges of the House has immediate precedence only at a time designated by the Chair within 2 legislative days after the resolution is properly noticed.

Pending that designation, the form of the resolution noticed by the gentleman from Georgia will appear in the RECORD at this point.

The Chair will not at this point determine whether the resolution constitutes a question of privilege. That determination will be made at the time designated for consideration of the resolution.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HOLDEN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on H.R. 4785.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

RURAL ENERGY SAVINGS PROGRAM ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1620 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 4785.

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IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 4785) to amend the miscellaneous rural development provisions of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to make loans to certain entities that will use the funds to make loans to consumers to implement energy efficiency measures involving structural improvements and investments in cost-effective, commercial off-the-shelf technologies to reduce home energy use, with Mr. SALAZAR in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

General debate shall not exceed 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Agriculture and the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOLDEN), the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS), the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD), and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON) each will control 15 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOLDEN).

Mr. HOLDEN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, the bill we are considering today, H.R. 4785, the Rural Energy Savings Program Act, will greatly benefit our rural residents. The agriculture provisions in this bill build on existing U.S. Department of Agriculture programs and will reduce energy consumption and, as a result, reduce energy costs in rural America.

Rural electric cooperatives estimate that the Rural Energy Savings Program Act has the potential to create between 20,000 and 40,000 jobs per year and will make loans available to between 1.1 and 1.6 million rural households, depending on the average consumer size. It is clear that this is a win-win proposition for our rural constituents and our rural economy.

This Act furthers the Agriculture Committee's commitment to expand renewable and alternative sources of power and discover new technologies to improve the efficiency and sustainability of existing power generation across rural America.

H.R. 4785 authorizes USDA's rural utility service to make interest-free loans to eligible entities. These enti-

ties will use these funds to make low-interest loans to rural consumers allowing them to implement energy-efficient measures on their property. Using the existing Rural Utilities Service structure, with the rural electric cooperatives as the delivery system, rural consumers can more quickly obtain the benefits of energy-efficient investments and ultimately decrease their energy bills.

Rural customers are facing increasing energy costs and rural electric cooperatives, which serve 42 million member owners across the country, are facing growing demand for electric power, yet are constrained from building new generation capacity.

The upfront costs to make energy-efficient upgrades are often beyond the reach of most consumers. This is true even if the costs can be recovered over time or a tax credit or a rebate would reduce the initial price. Additionally, consumers often lack the necessary knowledge about what technologies would be the most effective.

H.R. 4785 is an opportunity to meet these challenges and enact policy that we know will reduce energy costs and consumption and improve the quality of life in our rural communities.

I would like to thank Congressman CLYBURN and Congressman PERRIELLO for their hard work and dedication to improving energy efficiency and their support for the agriculture provisions within this Act.

Mr. Chairman, I strongly support the agriculture provisions contained in this Act and encourage its passage.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I must rise today in opposition to H.R. 4785, the Rural Energy Savings Program Act. As a result of the Democratic leadership's failed policies, we are now considering a bill that creates two new government funded programs to address high energy bills and energy demand. We are considering creating a program that duplicates thousands of other efficiency measures that Congress has passed and funded in the billions of dollars over the last several years.

H.R. 4785, as reported by the Agriculture Committee, would require the government, through USDA, to front nearly a billion dollars to rural electric cooperatives so that they can, in return, make what might potentially be risky loans to their customers for energy-efficiency projects in their homes. The investments made in this program would only benefit an estimated 1.5 million of the 43 million customers served by rural electric cooperatives. Energy efficiency is an important step in an overall energy plan. But creating a new government funded program is not the solution.

This issue can be addressed in the farm bill by making adjustments to current programs. The 2008 farm bill included a provision that would have allowed rural electric cooperatives to